Lab 4a: Synthesis of Sinusoidal Signals—Speech Synthesis

FORMAL Lab Report:

You must write a formal lab report that describes your system for speech synthesis (Section 4). *This lab report will be worth 150 points*.

You should read the Pre-Lab section of the lab and do all the exercises in the Pre-Lab section before your assigned lab time.

The Warm-up section of each lab must be completed **during your assigned Lab time** and the steps marked *Instructor Verification* must also be signed off **during the lab time** by one of the laboratory instructors.

After completing the warm-up section, turn in the verification sheet to your TA.

1 Introduction

This lab includes a project on speech synthesis with sinusoids.

The speech synthesis will be done with sinusoidal waveforms of the form

$$\mathbf{x}(\mathbf{t}) = \sum_{k} A_k \cos(\omega_k t + \phi_k)$$
(1)

where each sinusoid will have short duration on the order of the pitch period of the speaker.

One objective of this lab is to study how many sinusoids are needed to create a sentence that sounds good.

A secondary objective of the lab is the

challenge of putting together the short duration sinusoids without introducing artifacts at the transition times.

Finally, much of the understanding needed for this lab involves the spectral representation of signals—a topic that underlies this entire course.

2 Pre-Lab

In this lab, the periodic waveforms and speech signals will be created with

the intention of playing them out through a speaker.

Therefore, it is necessary to take into account the fact that a conversion is needed from the digital samples, which are numbers stored in the computer memory to the actual voltage waveform that will be amplified for the speakers.



2.1 D-to-A Conversion

Most computers have a built-in analog-to-digital (A-to-D) converter and a digital-to-analog (D-to-A) converter (usually on the sound card). These hardware systems are physical realizations of the idealized concepts of C-to-D and D-to-C converters respectively, but for purposes of this lab we will assume that the hardware A/D and D/A are perfect realizations.

The digital-to-analog conversion process has a number of aspects, but in its simplest form the only thing we need to worry about in this lab is that the time spacing (T_s) between the signal samples must correspond to the rate of the D-to-A hardware that is being used.

From MATLAB, the sound output is done by the soundsc(xx, fs) function which does support a variable D-to-A sampling rate if the hardware on the machine has such capability.

A convenient choice for the D-to-A conversion rate is 11025 samples per second, 1 so $T_s=1/11025$ seconds; another common choice is 8000 samples/sec.

Both of these rates satisfy the requirement of *sampling fast enough* as explained in the next section.

In fact, human speech has relatively low frequencies, so an even lower sampling rate could be used.

If you are using <code>soundsc()</code>, the vector <code>xx</code> will be scaled automatically for the D-to-A converter, but if you are using <code>sound.m</code>, you must scale the vector <code>xx</code> so that it lies between ± 1 . Consult help <code>sound.</code>

(a) The ideal C-to-D converter is, in effect, being implemented whenever we take samples of a continuous-time formula, e.g., x(t) at $t=t_n$.

We do this in MATLAB by first making a vector of times, and then evaluating the formula for the continuous-time signal at the sample times,

i.e.,
$$x[n] = x(nT_s)$$
 if $t_n = nT_s$.

This assumes perfect knowledge of the input signal, but we have already been doing it this way in previous labs.

To begin, create a vector x1 of samples of a

sinusoidal signal with $A_1 = 100$, $\omega_1 = 2\pi(800)$, and $\phi_1 = -\pi/3$.

Use a sampling rate of 11025 samples/second, and compute a total number of samples equivalent to a time duration of 0.5 seconds.

You may find it helpful to recall that a MATLAB statement such as tt=(0:0.01:3); would create a vector of numbers from 0 through 3 with increments of 0.01.

Therefore, it is only necessary to determine the time increment needed to obtain 11025 samples in one second.

Use soundsc() to play the resulting vector through the D-to-A converter

¹This sampling rate is one quarter of the rate (44,100 Hz) used in audio CD players.

of the your computer, assuming that the hardware can support the $f_s=11025\,$ Hz rate.

Listen to the output.

- (b) Now create another vector $\times 2$ of samples of a second sinusoidal signal (0.8 secs. in duration) for the case $A_2=80$, $\omega_2=2\pi(1200)$, and $\phi_2=+\pi/4$. Listen to the signal reconstructed from these samples. How does its sound compare to the signal in part (a)?
- (c) Concatenate the two signals x1 and x2from the previous parts and put a short durationof 0.1 seconds of silence in between.You should be able to concatenate by using a statement something like:

```
xx = [x1, zeros(1,N), x2];
```

assuming that both $\times 1$ and $\times 2$ are row vectors. Determine the correct value of **N** to make 0.1 seconds of silence. Listen to this new signal to verify that it is correct.

(d) To verify that the concatenation operation was done correctly in the previous part, make the following plot:

```
tt = (1/11025) * (1:length(xx)); plot(tt, xx);
```

This will plot a huge number of points, but it will show the "envelope" of the signal and verify that the amplitude changes from 100 to zero and then to 80 at the correct times. Notice that the time vector tt was created to have exactly the same length as the signal vector xx.

(e) Now send the vector xx to the D-to-A converter again, but change the sampling rate parameter in soundsc(xx, fs) to 22050 samples/second. *Do not recompute the samples in* xx, just tell the D-to-A converter that the sampling rate is 22050 samples/second. Describe how the *duration* and *pitch* of the signal were affected. Explain.



2.2 Debugging Skills

Testing and debugging code is a big part of any programming job, as you know if you've been staying up late on the first few labs.

Almost any modern programming environment provides a *symbolic debugger* so that break-points can be set and variables examined in the middle of program execution. Nonetheless, many programmers still insist on using the old-fashioned method of inserting print statements in the middle of their code (or the MATLAB equivalent, leaving off a few semi-colons). This is akin to riding a tricycle to commute around Atlanta.

There are two ways to use debugging tools in MATLAB: via buttons in the edit window or via the command line. For help on the edit-window debugging features, access the menu Help->Using the M-File Editor which will pop up a browser window at the help page for editing and debugging. For a summary of the command-line debugging tools, try help debug. Here is part of what you'll see:

dbstop - Set breakpoint.

dbclear - Remove breakpoint.

dbcont - Resume execution.

dbdown - Change local workspace context.

dbmex - Enable MEX-file debugging.

dbstack - List who called whom.

dbstatus - List all breakpoints.

dbstep - Execute one or more lines.

dbtype - List M-file with line numbers.

dbup - Change local workspace context.

dbquit - Quit debug mode.

When a breakpoint is hit, MATLAB goes into debug mode, the debugger window becomes active, and the prompt changes to a K>. Any MATLAB command is allowed at the prompt.

To resume M-file function execution, use DBCONT or DBSTEP.

To exit from the debugger use DBQUIT.

"debug mode" whenever an error occurs. This mode can be invoked by typing:

```
dbstop if error
```

With this mode active, you can snoop around inside a function and examine local variables that probably caused the error. You can also choose this option from the debugging menu in the MATLAB editor.

It's sort of like an

automatic call to 911 when you've gotten into an accident. Try dbstop help

dbstop for more information.

Download the file coscos.m and use the debugger to find the error(s) in the function. Call the function with the test case: $\cos\cos(2,3,20,1)$ [xn,tn] = $\cos\cos(2,3,20,1)$. Use the debugger to:

- Set a breakpoint to stop execution when an error occurs and jump into ''Keyboard'' mode,
- 2. display the contents of important vectors while stopped,
- 3. determine the size of all vectors by using either the size() function or the whos command.
- 4. and, lastly, modify variables while in the ''Keyboard'' mode of the debugger.

```
function [xx,tt] = coscos( f1, f2, fs, dur )
% COSCOS multiply two sinusoids
%
t1 = 0:(1/fs):dur;
t2 = 0:(1/f2):dur;
cos1 = cos(2*pi*f1*t1);
cos2 = cos(2*pi*f2*t2);
xx = cos1 .* cos2;
tt = t1;
```



2.3 Synthesizing a Signal from Sections

In speech synthesis, we will create the overall signal one section at a time. One way to do this is to add together a number of short signals; a mathematical notation for adding short signals that are time-shifted is given by

$$\mathbf{x}(\mathsf{t}) = \sum_{k=0}^{K-1} x_k (t - kT)$$

where each signal $x_k(t)$ is shifted by the amount T. If each signal has a duration of T, then the shifted signals $x_k(t-kT)$ do not overlap, and then we would actually be creating x(t) by concatenating the sections $x_k(t)$ one after the other, so the total duration of x(t) would be KT. Consider the case where

$$\mathbf{x}_k(t) = \cos(2\pi(411 + 100k)t)$$
 for $0 \le t < T$

In order to concatenate six sinusoids each with a duration of $T=0.3\,$ secs, run the MATLAB code below to make the signal which will have a duration of 1.8 s.

Then the changing frequency content (vs. time) of the synthesized signal can be verified by displaying a spectrogram.

```
fs = 8000;
tt = 0:1/fs:0.3;
M = 6;
L = length(tt);
xx = zeros(1,M*L);
for k = 1:M
    jkl = (k-1)*L + (1:L);
    xx(jkl) = xx(jkl) + cos(2*pi*(411+100*k)*tt);
end
```

One problem with this synthesis by concatenation is that the transition from one section to the next might not be smooth. Examine a plot of x(t) to see the jumps at multiples of T.



3 Warm-up

We can join signal segments together smoothly if we use ''windowing.''

3.1 Triangular Window

Sometimes it is necessary to modify the values of a signal to taper the ends. This can be accomplished with what is called a window function.

One of the simplest window functions is the window triangular window defined for duration T as

$$w_{\Delta}(t) = \begin{cases} t/T & 0 \le t < T \\ 2 - t/T & T \le t \le 2T \\ 0 & \text{elsewhere} \end{cases}$$
(2)

- (a) Draw a sketch (by hand) of $w_{\Delta}(t)$ for the case T=50 millisec.
- (b) Write a MATLAB function that will generate (samples of) a triangular window.

Since sampling at t=0 or t=2T would give a zero value, generate the time vector at $t=0.5/f_s, 1.5/f_s, 2.5/f_s,$

 $\dots Use {\tt linspace} or the colonoperator to generate$

the values $w_{\Delta}(t)$ that make up the lines on the sides of the triangle. Use the following comments as a template:

```
function [win,tt] = triwin( T, fs )
% TRIWIN make a triangular window
%
%    T, so that 2T = duration of the window
%    fs = sampling rate
% win = values of the window at the times in the tt vector
```

 $^{^2 \}mbox{The subscript } \Delta \mbox{ in } w_\Delta(t) \mbox{ is}$ meant to convey the shape of the triangular window.



(c) Test your triwin function by making a MATLAB plot of a triangular window for the case T=50 millisec, using a sampling rate of 8000 samples/sec. How long is the window in number of samples?

Instructor Verification (separate page)

3.2 Overlapped Signal Segments

In Section 2.3, you created a long signal by concatenating short segments. A second method of forming the long signal is to use overlapped short segments. Here we will study how to extract

such overlapped segments from a long signal. Suppose that we start with a long signal y(t) and we extract short segments from y(t) in the following manner:

$$y_k(t) = \begin{cases} y(t+kT) & 0 \le t < 2T \\ 0 & \text{elsewhere} \end{cases}$$

In other words, the $k^{\rm th}$ segment, $y_k(t)$, starts at t=kT and ends at t=(k+2)T. Furthermore, successive signal segments, such as $y_k(t)$ and $y_{k+1}(t)$, have 50% overlap.

(a) Number of Segments:

If the duration of y(t) is 1.5 sec. and T=50 msec., how many segments would be produced by overlap method in (3)?

(b) **Segment Length:**

If we are using MATLAB to represent the signal y(t), then we would sample y(t) at a rate f_s to produce a vector containing the samples, i.e., $y[n] = y(n/f_s)$. For example, if $f_s = 8000$ samples/sec and the duration of y(t) is 1.5 sec., then the entire ''y'' vector would contain 12000 samples. How many samples are contained in each segment created by the overlap method in (3) if T = 50 msecs. and $f_s = 8000$

(c) Write a short MATLAB function that will perform the segmentation according to (3). The function's output should be a matrix whose column length is the number of samples in one segment, and whose row length is the number of

segments. Here is a template:

```
function yseg = overlap50( yy, T, fs )
% OVERLAP50 Fill matrix columns with signal segments
                 overlapped by 50%
  yy = (long) input signal
  T, so that 2T = duration of the window
  fs = sampling rate
% yseg = matrix containing segmented signal
L = round(fs*T); L2 = round(fs*T*2);
Ly = length(yy);
n2 = L2;
k=1;
while( n2<Ly)
  n1 = ???? <---- FILL IN CODE for n1 and n2
  ychop = yy(n1:n2);
  yseg(:,k) = ychop(:); %--make sure it's a column
  k = k+1;
  n2 = n2 + L;
end
```

(d) Test your function for T=25 msec. and $f_s=8000$ samples/sec. on the following signal:

```
yy = cos(40*pi*(0:(1/8000):1.5));
```

Explain why every other column of the yseg matrix is identical for this test case. Use the MATLAB plotting function strips(yseg(:,1:6)) to plot the first



six columns (as rows in the plot).

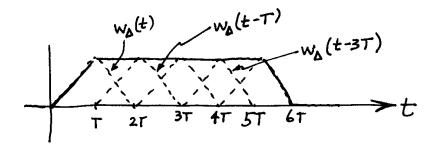
Instructor Verification (separate page)

3.3 Overlapped Windows

The triangular window has the following interesting property:
when you add shifted triangular windows, the
result is one, except for the ends. This property can be stated mathematically
as

$$\sum_{k=0}^{K-1} w_{\Delta}(t - kT) = \begin{cases} t/T & 0 \le t < T \\ 1 & T \le t \le KT \\ K + 1 - t/T & KT < t < (K+1)T \\ 0 & (K+1)T \le t \end{cases}$$

The important line in this equation is the second one which says that the sum equals one in the intervals where the triangles overlap, see Fig. 3.3.



must be even for this property to hold on the time-sampled window.

Figure 1: Sum of shifted and overlapped triangular windows. The window length must be even for this property to hold on the time-sampled window.

(a) Complete the code fragment below that will add together six shifted triangular windows. It should produce a plot something like Fig. 3.3.



Instructor Verification (separate page)

3.4 Add Overlapped and Windowed Segments

We can use the overlap property of the triangular window (eq. (4) in Section 3.3) to add back together the segments from the 50% overlap method of eq. (3). First of all, we would apply the triangular window to each segment, i.e., $w_{\Delta}(t)y_k(t)$, and then we would add all of the segments together the correct shift.with the correct shift.

$$\sum_{k=0}^{K} w_{\Delta}(t - kT) y_k(t - kT)$$

The result will be equal to y(t) except for the regions at the ends.

(a) Here is a code fragment that does the windowing:

```
% yseg = matrix containing segmented signal
for k = 1:size(yseg,2)
  ysegwin(:,k) = yseg(:,k).*triwin(size(yseg,1)/(2*fs),fs)';
end
```

- (b) Write a for loop that will add the windowed segments back together to form yy over most of the time interval, except for the first and last T secs. Refer to Section 3.4(a) for sample code.
- (c) Now test the entire process with the signal

```
xx = cos(2*pi*440*tt);
```

```
with a segment duration of 10 millisec., 50% overlap, and f_s=8000~{\rm Hz}. Perform the three processing steps as : (1) break it into segments (refer to Section 3.2(c)), (2) window each segment with a triangular window (part (a) above), and (3) add the segments back together (part (b) above). Show that the result is a 440-Hz cosine, except for the first 5 millisec. and the last 5 millisec.
```

4 Lab: Synthesis of Speech with Sinusoids

Speech signals are often ''quasi-periodic'' especially in vowel regions. Thus it is reasonable to expect that speech utterances might be synthesized from a few sinusoids. On the other hand, fricatives such as /s/ and /sh/ sounds are not sinusoidal, so there are probably regions where the sinusoidal synthesis would do a poor job. Fortunately, the intelligibility of an utterance depends mostly on the vowels and less on the fricatives. Speech can be synthesized by adding together a bunch of short-duration sinusoids. Thus, an important factor in the sinusoidal synthesis of speech is the



frame length, which is the time interval during which one set of sinusoids is used. From frame to frame the sinusoids can change. In speech, there are two time durations that would be relevant to picking the frame length:

the speaker's pitch period and the articulation rate of humans in general. The *pitch period* varies with individuals and with sex---adult males generally have a lower pitch than adult females and hence the pitch period is longer for an adult male speaker.

The articulation rate is a measure or how fast a speaker can form different sounds and is dictated by how fast the muscles in the vocal tract can move to form different sounds. For example, try saying the alphabet (A-B-C-D-E-F) as fast as you can. It is generally accepted that the individual sounds can change no faster than every 40-50 millisec. Taken together the pitch frequency and articulation rate determine how often we should try changing the sinusoids for the speech synthesis. We will use a frame length around 10 millisec. which is close to the pitch period of most speakers.

In the process of actually synthesizing the speech, keep in mind the following general ideas:

- (a) Determine a sampling frequency that will be used to play out the sound through the D-to-A system of the computer. This will dictate the time $T_s=1/f_s$ between samples of the sinusoids.
- (b) The total time duration needed for each sinusoid is fixed by the frame length.
- (c) An analysis function sigAnalyze is provided to extract sinusoidal components from a signal. It is given as ''p-code'', so it can be run like an M-file even though the actual code cannot be viewed.
- (d) Synthesize the speech waveform as a combination of overlapped (or concatenated) sinusoids, and play it out through the computer's built-in speaker or headphones using soundsc().
- (e) Include a spectrogram image of a portion of each synthesized utterance---probable about 1 or 2 secs---so that you can illustrate the fact that you have used the correct number of sinusoids. In effect, you can use the spectrogram to confirm the correctness of your synthesis. The window length in the spectrogram might have to be adjusted, but start with an initial value of 256 for the window length in specgram() or plotspec(), and then increase it.

Note: by default, the spectrogram M-files will scale the



frequency axis to run from zero to half the sampling frequency, so it might be useful to ''zoom in'' on the region where the frequencies are. Consult help zoom, or use the zoom tool in MATLAB figure windows.

Data Format for Speech Signals

```
Any speech signal can be encoded with the MATLAB function
  sigAnalyze which has the following calling
  format:
  function [Camps,Freqs] = sigAnalyze(xx,fs,numSines,frameDur,overlap)
  %SIGANALYZE produce sinusoidal components per frame for a signal
  % usage: [Camps,Freqs] = sigAnalyze(xx,fs,numSines,frameDur,overlap)
  응
      xx = input signal vector
      fs = sampling rate (samples per sec)
      numSines = # of sinusoids to find (only the positive freqs are counted)
   응
      frameDur = duration of each frame in secs.
      overlap = frame overlap in secs. (must be less than frameDur)
   응
      Camps = array of complex amps (number of frames by numSines)
  응
      Freqs = array of freqs, one for each complex amp
  The output of sigAnalyze gives the
  frequencies and complex amplitudes needed in each frame; the
  inputs are the analysis parameters such as frame duration,
  frame overlap, and sampling rate.
  In the complex-amplitude and frequency arrays, the
  value of Freqs(j,n) is the n^{\rm th}
  frequency (in Hz) in the j^{th} frame of the signal; the
  corresponding complex amplitude is Camps(j,n).
  There are at least three ways to get a speech signal into MATLAB, depending
on the format:
 1. Use the wavread function to load the speech data
```

For example, [xx,fs]=wavread('catsdogs.wav');.

in from a WAV file.



2. Use the load command to load in data from a MAT file, which is MATLAB's binary format.

For example, load s7.mat

3. Use audiorecorder to record directly from a microphone into MATLAB.

In addition, you can write a WAV file from MATLAB with the wavwrite function. Use help wavwrite for more info, and be careful that you scale the signal's amplitude to be between ± 1 .

4.1 Synthesis

In this lab, you will use the given function sigAnalyze to create a set of complex amplitudes and frequencies of sinusoids for each small frame of various signals, and then write a function to re-synthesize the speech signal from a limited number of sinusoidal components.

(a) Write a sigSynth function that will take the outputs from sigAnalyze and produce an output signal in which the frames can be overlapped. You can use a function like syn_sin written in a previous lab to sum the complex exponentials within one frame. However, if you wrote syn_sin with a time increment that depends on the highest frequency, then you will have modify it so that the time increment depends on the sampling rate, and the sampling rate should become one of the inputs.

Note: If the signal was analyzed with an overlap in sigAnalyze, then you must use a segmenting strategy like overlap50 inside of sigSynth.

(b) Apply sigAnalyze to a recording of your own voice which is sampled at $f_s=8000~\rm Hz$. Use a frame duration of 10 ms, a 5 ms overlap, and extract 8 sinusoidal frequency components (per frame). 4

One possible utterance is the vowels, i.e., 'A-E-I-O-U''.

Consult the help on audiorecorder and read the examples.

Make sure to save the data as "double" instead of "int16."

available, but you

are not required to process it for your lab report.

³MATLAB (version 7) has a function called

audiorecorder that can acquire sound from a microphone via a sound card.

⁴The file catdogs . wav is also



- (c) Synthesize the speech using all 8 frequencies components obtained in the analysis of part (b).
 - Compare spectrograms of the original and the resynthesized signal, and comment on the differences that you hear in the sounds.
- (d) Now, extract 4 frequency components and synthesize the speech (these will be

the four largest ones).

Compare spectrograms of the original and the resynthesized signal, and comment on the differences that you hear in the sounds.

4.2 Synthesize Music

- The per-frame sinusoidal synthesis should work on signals other than speech, e.g., music, singing, etc. However, since the frame duration parameter depends on the type of signal, it is unlikely that the value picked for speech signals will be the best choice for a signal like music.
- (a) Apply the sigAnalysis and sigSynth functions to the recording of the piano piece Für Elise which can be found in the file FurElise.wav.

Use the same parameters as before: a frame duration of 10 ms, and overlap of 5 ms, and keep 8 sinusoidal components from the analysis.

Compare spectrograms of the original and the resynthesized signal, and comment on the differences that you hear in the sounds.

(b) Now, try to get a better result by changing the number of sinusoids. Determine

how many are needed to get a result that sounds very close to the original. There is probably not one answer for this number, because it depends on

your individual perception of the distortions in the resynthesized signal.

(c) Now, try to improve the result by changing the frame duration while also reducing the number of sinusoids from the amount found in the previous

part. For example, consider the possibility that if you make the frame duration shorter, then you might be able to reduce the number of sinusoids.



4.3 Mystery Signal

One more data set, sigMystery.mat, is included as a challenge for synthesis. This is a .MAT file containing the arrays Camps and Freqs extracted from a speech signal with $f_s=8000\,$ Hz, a frame duration of 8 msec., and 50% overlap. You should run your synthesis algorithm with the objective of trying to understand what is being uttered.

4.4 Testing

Bring your working synthesis program to the lab when your report is due. A couple of

test signals will be run to verify that you have a successful synthesis program.

The format of the test signals will the same as sigMystery.mat, so make sure that your program can handle such inputs quickly and easily.

In addition, you will be asked some questions about the inner workings of

your MATLAB synthesis function(s).

4.5 Lab Report Suggestions

Your lab report should include spectrograms of the original and the synthesized signals. The write-up should point out features in the spectrograms that indicate the differences between the eight-sinusoid and four-sinusoid cases for your voice. In addition, you should make subplots of the original signal and the resynthesized signal versus time, and identify where they are different by marking such features on the plots. The comparison will be easier

if you scale both the original and the resynthesized signal to have the a maximum value of one.



Instructor Verification Sheet Lab 4 Instructor Verification Sheet

For each verification, be prepared to explain your answer and respond to other related questions that the lab TA's or professors might ask. Turn this page in at the end of your lab period.

Name:	Date of Lab:
Part 3.1 Make a triangular window triwin.m:	M-file
Verified:	Date/Time:
Part 3.2 Test overlapped signal segments:	
Verified:	Date/Time:
Part 3.3 Overlapped triangular windows:	
Verified:	Date/Time:
Criteria Speech Evaluation Criteria	
Are the sentences intelligible?	All Most Only one
Does the music (Fúr Elise) sound	good?
Mystery sentence correct?	
Test sentence correct?	
Overall Impression:	

Good:



Good sound quality. Works well for both 4 and 8 sinusoids.

OK:

Basic sinusoidal synthesis, but not smooth at the boundaries. Possible problem with windowing.

Poor:

Synthesis does not work properly. Poor sound quality.